



Erev Pesah that Falls on Shabbat:

Halakhic Guidance¹

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Thursday

- The fast of the firstborn is observed on Thursday, 12th Nissan, from dawn until dusk.² The common custom is to be present at a *siyyum* (a completion of a significant learning unit) on Thursday morning, and then not to fast.³ It is best to be physically present with those who are completing a section of learning and to share in a common meal with them. If this is impossible, joining with others via a video conference can suffice, assuming it includes some celebratory eating together virtually after the *siyyum*.⁴
- Check for *hametz* on Thursday night, 13th Nissan, at *tzeit ha-kokhavim* (nightfall), or as soon afterwards as possible. The liturgy is the same as in all other years: a blessing is made before checking, and the nullification formula is recited after the search. The text can be found in any standard Haggadah or Siddur.

¹ This guidance is written to try to make Erev Pesah straightforward. Therefore, there are certain practices that, while halakhically permissible, we have recommended against, for the sake of a minimally stressful Erev Pesah.

² SA 470:2 cites a view that the fast is simply canceled in a year when 14th Nissan falls on Shabbat. ילקוט יוסף sides with this view, but recommends, when possible, attending a *siyyum*.

³ For an in depth analysis of who is required to fast (or get out of the fast by attending a *siyyum*), see Ethan Tucker, "Who Should Fast on the Day Before the Seder?," available here: <https://www.hadar.org/torah-resource/who-should-fast-day-seder>.

⁴ This is particularly defensible in a year when some authorities think the fast is canceled entirely. (See note 2).



Friday Day

- *Bi'ur hametz* (the symbolic burning of at least some of one's *hametz*) should be performed before the beginning of the sixth variable hour on Friday, as in other years. This is a bit more than an hour prior to astronomical noon.⁵ Unlike other years, however, *bitul hametz* (the nullification of *hametz*) should not be done at this point; that occurs on Shabbat morning (see below).
- Put aside at least three loaves of *hallah* for Friday night dinner and Shabbat lunch. Since you will have to dispose of any *hallah* that you don't eat, it makes sense to use small *hallot*. Any *hametz* you will be eating for the rest of the day on Friday and during Shabbat should be stored very carefully in a container that will ensure that no crumbs will fall anywhere.
- Any other *hametz* that is left over after Friday lunch should be disposed of either by burning it, or by throwing it out into a public garbage container. **You should enter into Shabbat with no excess *hametz* to dispose of, other than what you are planning to eat on Shabbat.**
- Since disposing of *hametz* on Shabbat can sometimes be difficult to do, we recommend that, aside from the *hallah*, you don't prepare food containing *hametz* for Shabbat meals. And so as to avoid putting away *hametz* utensils on Shabbat, it is best to prepare all of the food for Shabbat with Pesah utensils and to eat on Pesah dishes. If you wish to avoid any encounter with *hametz* over Shabbat, you can use egg *matzah* instead of a regular *hallah*.
- Before Shabbat, make sure to light a candle that will last at least until Shabbat is over (or for 2 or 3 days, until the end of Yom Tov). You will use this candle to light the Yom Tov candles from an existing flame on Saturday night.

Shabbat Meals

- At Friday night dinner and Shabbat lunch—if eating *hallah* as opposed to egg *matzah*—the bread should be eaten by itself, not over your Pesah dishes. It is best

⁵ You can use this website to calculate when the halakhic times fall where you live:
<http://www.myzmanim.com>.



to eat it in a separate space from where you will have lunch, from which you can still see the table.

- It is forbidden to eat any hametz after **the beginning of the fifth variable hour** on Shabbat morning. Therefore, many synagogues will end their services early. You should make sure to start your meal with plenty of time to ensure you have eaten the hallah before the latest permissible time to eat hametz. For Ashkenazim observing the traditional restrictions around egg *matzah*, that should be consumed by this time as well.
- After all hametz that will be eaten has been consumed, anything left over should be disposed of. Make sure you identify and remove any crumbs, rinse them down the drain, flush them down the toilet or scatter them outside if possible. If there were any plates used with bread at these first two meals, clean them (without a sponge) and store them away with your non-Pesah utensils.
- After consuming and disposing of all of the hametz, the daytime declaration of nullification should be recited. This too is found in any standard Haggadah. This should all be done **before the beginning of the sixth variable hour**. You may continue your meal after this point if you wish, so long as none of the food contains hametz.
- Se'udah Shelishit should be eaten before the beginning of the tenth variable hour, a little more than three hours before sunset. You should not have plain *matzah* at Se'udah Shelishit. Sefaradim have the custom to make *ha-motzi* on egg *matzah*, and Ashkenazim simply follow the view that Se'udah Shelishit can consist of fruits, vegetables or meat.⁶ In any case, make sure not to eat too much; you want to have a nice appetite for the Seder!

⁶ ערב פסח להר"צ כהן פכ"א הערה ל'. See



מוצאי שבת/Saturday Night—The Seder

- All preparations for the Seder should be made either before or after Shabbat. This includes cooking, reheating food, laying out platters of food and setting the table. If possible, set the Seder table before Shabbat and eat in a different area during Shabbat. If not possible, try to have everything as ready to go as possible.
- Arvit can be timed to conclude with *tzeit ha-kokhavim*, so that you can begin the Seder as quickly as possible. Remember to add the paragraph ותודיענו, which serves as a Havdalah between Shabbat and Yom Tov. You can then light candles and begin the Seder.⁷
- Havdalah is intertwined with Kiddush. The full liturgy is included in most Haggadahs. The order is captured by the mnemonic: יקנה"ז, which stands for: יין, קידוש, נר, הבדלה, זמן / wine, sanctifying the day, candle, Havdalah, *zeman* (i.e. *she-heh*h*iyyanu*).

⁷ For those being hosted at a Seder that is starting before the end of Shabbat, see our separate resource on how to navigate this situation, available here:

<https://www.hadar.org/torah-resource/can-you-start-seder-early>.

